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ABSTRACT

Individual transition plans (ITPs) outline specific curricular content and implementation strategies to help the postschool adjustment of severely handicapped students. ITPs should be longitudinal, comprehensible, based on functional objectives, oriented to a wide variety of actual environments, and should include input from competent related services personnel. A model for developing and implementing ITPs is composed of five phases: (1) developing transition timelines and targeting desirable characteristics of postschool environments and services; (2) gaining access to and/or creating postschool environments and services; (3) prioritizing, developing, and coordinating transition objectives; (4) generating, developing, and implementing training and supervision models; and (5) evaluating ITP effectiveness. ITP procedures can promote independence in living in supervised apartment situations, working in nonsheltered vocational settings, and accessing a wide variety of community recreation/leisure activities. Appendices include: a guide for use as a parent/guardian transition questionnaire; and forms for documenting parental, school, and postschool agency contacts and for organizing information on transitioning students and transition objectives. (CL)

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PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE TRANSITIONS OF SEVERELY HANDICAPPED STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL TO POSTSCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS[1]

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1982

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I. INTRODUCTION

All individuals experience transitions during their lifetime. These occur throughout the day, week, year, etc. Some are minute, e.g., the transition from the classroom to the gym; some are more pronounced, e.g., the transition from weekend activities to a Monday routine; and some are major, e.g., the transition from one school to another or to postschool environments. Whereas, all of these transitions should be addressed instructionally or practically with severely handicapped students, this paper will be concerned primarily with the transition from school to postschool environments. This transition typically involves a severely handicapped student, his/her family, the public school system, and adult service or postschool agencies.

Usually, nonhandicapped high school students take classes to prepare for the future. For example, one student may take college preparatory classes while another pursues vocational technical classes which will train him/her to assume a job. The reality is that nonhandicapped students can apply the information learned in these classes to future situations. However, it cannot be assumed that when a severely handicapped student graduates to new environments the skills previously taught will be applied, adapted or generalized to the extent that performance in the new environments will be as independent or as productive as that performed in the old (Reese & Lipsitt, 1970; Stokes & Baer, 1977). In order to minimize some of the problems associated with the school to postschool transition, a specific transition plan is needed. Severely handicapped students must rely on their parents/guardians, educators and adult service personnel to develop these transition plans based on comprehensive and accurate information. Incomplete planning may result in a graduate learning few, if any, new skills, and may in fact result in performance regression (Brown, Nisbet, Ford, Sweet, Shiraga, York & Loomis, 1983.

Problems associated with school to postschool transitions were documented in a follow-up examination of severely handicapped graduates who graduated from the Madison Metropolitan School District between the years of 1971-78 (VanDeventer, Yelinek, Brown, Schroeder, Loomis & Gruenewald, 1981). Some of the observations made by the evaluation team were that:

> Many skills taught during school years and performed in both school and nonschool environments were not frequently used in postschool domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure or general community environments;
>
> Changes in domestic environments, usually from natural homes to group homes, were abrupt, unplanned and frequently resulted in many adjustment problems;
>
> If a graduate had a job at all, it was in an unduly "sheltered" vocational environment. In fact, only 1 of the 53 graduates functioned in a part-time competitive vocational environment;
>
> Almost all recreation/leisure activities in which the graduates engaged occurred in "handicapped only" environments; and

Receiving environments were typically given only sketchy information about an individual severely handicapped person from sending environments. This in turn contributed to inaccurate judgments, exceedingly long time delays, poor placements and resulting poor adjustments.

Many persons directly involved with the graduates felt that the transition difficulties noted in this follow-up examination stemmed from: the limited number of domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure and community functioning options available; and the fact that few educators looked beyond the age of 21 to determine whether the curricula utilized were actually preparatory. Therefore, to avoid unnecessary difficulties during and after the transition, systematic efforts must be made: to determine and extend the number of options available to severely handicapped graduates; and to ensure that the curricula offered are in fact preparatory for functioning in heterogeneous postschool environments. Unsuccesstul and successful transition efforts and outcomes are presented in the following case studies.

II. CASE STUDIES

The following case studies are presented in order to illustrate the variety of events which could positively or negatively influence transitions from school to postschool environments.

A. An Unsuccessful Transition

Tom K. is a 22-year-old severely handicapped individual who lives at a residential facility with approximately 100 other persons and works in a sheltered workshop. Although integrated environments were preferred by Tom and his parents, a lack of coordination between service providers and inefficient planning resulted in his present situation: a situation described as the "best" that could be arranged.

Tom received 12 years of public school education. During this time the school district made many changes which included the closing of a segregated school, assignment of all students to regular elementary schools, and then assignment to chronological age appropriate schools. For Tom, these district wide changes meant that his first eight years were spent in an elementary school, followed by a direct move to high school. There was not a longitudinal curriculum for Tom, therefore, his high school instruction had little, if any, relation to previous instruction.

In high school, Tom received instruction in a variety of domestic environments and at age 21 had acquired some of the skills necessary to function in a small group home or apartment setting with a moderate amount of supervision. Unfortunately, however, the only residential option available was an overly restrictive, 100-person facility.

From the time Tom turned 18 years of age, he received three years of nonschool vocational training at an accessible laboratory where he

cleaned hardware and other technical equipment. This was a potential postschool vocational placement until Tom moved outside of the city to the only residential facility available. Because he no longer had access to public transportation and was unable to get to his laboratory job, he was placed in a sheltered vocational environment. There, specialized transportation was provided by the workshop to all the clients regardless of residence.

Tom's parents were interested in finding less restrictive postschool environments for him but did not know which agency would or could assist them in this process. The school personnel had similar interests yet while Tom was a student they had not inventoried adult service agencies, their admission requirements, financial considerations, transportation options, etc. Although Tom received 12 years of education in public schools and other nonsegregated environments and had learned to use city buses and community facilities, the transition from high school to postschool environments could be considered unsuccessful. It resulted in domestic and work environments of low expectations, segregation and few, if any, opportunities to practice and develop community functioning and recreation/leisure skills.

B. A Successful Transition

Susan R. is a 22 year old severely handicapped individual. For the past three years her parents, teachers and associated adult service personnel have been working together to assure that upon graduation, she would make a smooth transition to postschool vocational, domestic, community and recreation/leisure environments.

Since Susan was 10 years of age, her parents have been contacting local adult service providers and the local Developmental Disabilities Board to inform them that she would need supervision to live in an apartment as soon as possible after her twentieth birthday. In addition, they suggested that Susan share an apartment with her friend Linda who is also severely handicapped.

Susan's teachers and parents carefully planned longitudinal curricula. That is, when Susan graduated from middle school, she continued to receive instruction which built upon her middle school experiences. When Susan reached 20 years of age, instruction was provided in the environments in which she would function after graduation. For example, she received direct instruction in her own apartment. The stores, restaurants, buslines, etc., near her home were utilized for community instruction. In addition, Susan continued to receive instruction at the restaurant where she was learning to bus tables.

In December of Susan's final year of school, personnel from domestic and vocational agencies began to work with her teachers from the public school. This was done to assure that Susan continued to receive instruction based on her individual needs. During the summer after graduation, the responsibility for supervision was transferred

from school to adult service personnel, although school personnel and her parents were available for consultation and further information.

Susan now lives in an apartment with her friend Linda and receives supervision during evening meals and morning preparation for work. She continues to receive assistance and instruction in meal planning, shopping, money management, etc. She also rides the city bus to her job. The careful development of an Individual Transition Plan promoted and enhanced Susan's adult life space and helped assure her status as a contributing member of society.

In sum, the experiences of Tom and Susan represent some of the problems and successes that can accrue during transitions from school to postschool environments. In order to minimize transition problems and maximize successes, adult service and school personnel must design and implement longitudinal, subsequent environment oriented curricula, secure ongoing parent/guardian involvement and esgablish systems that maximize coordination and communication. Through the development of Individual Transition Plans (ITPs), it is hoped more success stories can be realized.

III. INDIVIDUAL TRANSITION PLANS

An Individual Transition Plan (ITP) includes both specific curricular content and implementation strategies (Brown, Pumpian, Baumgart, VanDeventer, Ford, Nisbet, Schroeder & Gruenewald, 1981). More specifically, an ITP contains individually relevant information concerning current and subsequent life spaces of an individual severely handicapped student and the strategies and actions which enhance the probabilities of fluid and habilitative movement from one cluster of environments to another. Brown, et al. (1981) suggested that an ITP:

> Should be longitudinal in nature;
>
> Must be designed and implemented to include a comprehensive program of domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure, and general community training;
>
> Must contain transition objectives, in which training activities, materials, and evaluation strategies are functionally related to unique subsequent life spaces;
>
> Requires the actual participation of both school and adult service personnel;
>
> Requires direct instruction in a wide variety of actual subsequent environments; and
>
> Should include the focused expertise of competent related service personnel (p.8-9).

The ITP, although not distinctly separate, differs from an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) in two ways. First, in addition to parents/guardians and public school personnel, adult service providers are actively involved in the development of individualized objectives; and second,

objectives reflect the actual requirements of the specific postschool environments to which a student will transition.

In order to successfully plan and implement an ITP, at least the following question must be addressed: What considerations, events, and actions are most likely to positively influence the transition from school to postschool environments? The remainder of the paper will respond to this question by delineating a model for planning and implementing ITP's.

IV. A MODEL FOR DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING INDIVIDUALIZED TRANSITION PLANS

In general, the design and implementation of ITPs require the cooperation of parents/guardians and school and adult service agency personnel. This cooperation is necessary in order to gather, organize and share information about the student and to develop and implement an individually relevant transition from school to postschool environments.

For organizational purposes, this model is divided into six nonmutually exclusive phases. These phases are concerned with: developing transition timelines and targeting the desirable characteristics of postschool environments and services; gaining access to and/or creating postschool environments and services; prioritizing, developing and coordinating transition objectives; generating, developing and implementing training and supervision models; and evaluating the effectiveness of transition plans.

A. Phase I: Develop Transition Timelines and Target Specific Characteristics of Postschool Environments and Services

The objectives of this phase are to:

Determine when to develop the Individual Transition Plan;

Secure family involvement and delineate their preferences;

Analyze the number, variety and characteristics of postschool environments; and

Target the least restrictive postschool environments and services.

1. Determine When to Develop the ITP

ITP's can be developed within the final year of severely handicapped students' public school career. Due to the fact that some students acquire skills and learn routines at a relatively fast rate, this timeline may be acceptable. However, for most severely handicapped students who require many more trials in order to learn, transition plans which are developed in the final two or three years of school, may be deemed more appropriate. In order to avoid starting too late and sacrificing the opportunity to acquire skills which will ultimately lead to greater independence in postschool environments, educators should generate individual

timelines based on the learning and performance characteristics of the student of concern. This can be accomplished by: reviewing student records for the rate of acquisition of skills and performance in meaningful activities; and evaluating the student's present performance and compare it with previous and future performance.

2. Secure Family Involvement and Delineate Preferences

Persons responsible for the development and delivery of services to severely handicapped persons must make every effort to work in a cooperative and coordinated manner with their families. Decisions made about the future functioning of a severely handicapped student in the absence of family involvement often result in difficulty for all those involved. For example, parents/guardians may prefer that their son/daughter have a certain type of job, and live within a specific neighborhood or distance from them. A balance must exist between family preferences, student preferences, and reasonable expectations in order to achieve an effective transition to postschool environments.

Educators can utilize several strategies to secure family involvement in the transition process. These include: utilizing a parent/guardian transition questionnaire; and providing parents/guardians with ways to initiate and maintain contacts with adult service providers.

The Parent/Guardian Transition Questionnaire which is located in Appendix A, enables a teacher to acquire information from families related to current and future concerns and preferences regarding their son or daughter. This guide also provides a format for delineating services which are currently being used and those which will be necessary after graduation from high school. In addition, teachers might provide parents/guardians with ways to initiate and maintain contacts with adult service providers. For example, every year on the birthday of their child, a parent/guardian might be advised to call the local Developmental Disabilities Board to report, for example: "My daughter is eight. In 13 years she will need vocational training in a nonsheltered work setting and supervision in an apartment."

3. Analyze the Number, Variety and Characteristics of Postschool Vocational, Domestic, Recreation/Leisure and Community Functioning Environments and Services

A lack of information by parents/guardians, school personnel and adult service agencies generally results in problematic transitions for severely handicapped graduates. Consider the implications when:

Educators and parents/guardians have little or no information about the environments in which a severely handicapped student will function after graduation from high school; and

Educators and parents/guardians have little or no information about the adult service agencies existing in their communities.

When the number and variety of available environments and services are unknown to educators and parents/guardians, there is a low probability that severely handicapped students will effectively transition to them.

Strategies which can be used by parents/guardians and school personnel to acquire information about subsequent environments and adult service providers are: calling local service boards and agencies and inquiring about present services; contacting local advocacy and parent organizations for handicapped persons; and touring vocational, domestic, and recreation/leisure programs currently available to severely handicapped persons. At least the following questions can be asked during the information gathering process:

a) Who does the agency serve?

b) How is the environment staffed?

c) How much instruction is currently occurring?

d) What is the "mission" of the agency?

e) What is the range of activities available?

f) What interactions with nonhandicapped peers and other persons are available?

g) How is supervision provided?

h) What is the cost of utilizing the service or environment?

i) How is the service funded?

j) What transportation options are utilized?

Conducting an inventory of this nature is one effective method of identifying the agencies and environments which best meet the needs of the student of concern. If none are appropriate, the process, at least, assists in targeting the least restrictive postschool environments and services.

4. Target the Least Restrictive Postschool Environments and Services

Often a severely handicapped individual is placed in an unnecessarily restrictive environment. Usually this placement is made with the intention of moving the individual into a less restrictive environment at a later point in time. Unfortunately, a severely handicapped person who moves from a sheltered workshop

into a nonsheltered vocational placement or from an eight-bed group home into a three-bedroom supervised apartment is the exception rather than the rule. To avoid the unnecessary restriction in less than optimal conditions, the least restrictive environments and services should be targeted from the onset of the transition process.

To assist in the determination of the least restrictive environments, parents and guardians should consider the potential for growth and development within those environments. When nonhandicapped persons graduate from high school, they usually continue to acquire many new skills, interests and attitudes. This acquisition occurs regardless of systematic instruction. However, this is generally not true for severely handicapped graduates who, unless encouraged and required to use skills learned in school, may risk loss or degeneration of those skills. For example, a student with rudimentary math skills may be trained for a job which encourages a student to use these skills. Similarly, a student with reading skills could have work available to him/her which requires the use of those skills, e.g., clerical activities. This is not to say that severely handicapped students should be deprived of the opportunity to engage in certain jobs or activities due to math, reading, motoric, communication or other deficits. On the contrary, such deficits can often be overcome through the utilization of a wide variety of adaptations available to enhance performance across environments and activities (Baumgart, Brown, Pumpian, Nisbet, Ford, Sweet, Ranieri, Hansen & Schroeder, 1982).

Strategies which can be used by parents/guardians and educators to target the least restrictive postschool environments are:

a) Delineate the critical characteristics of desirable postschool environment; e.g., size, nature of the activity, frequency of domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure and community functioning environments;

b) Delineate the current range of postschool services available which most closely approximate the previously listed characteristics;

c) Delineate the discrepancies which exist between steps (a) and (b); and

d) Delineate potential adult service providers and/or those services which will have to be developed. Then proceed to Phase II in the model.

B. Phase II: Gain Access To and/or Create Postschool Environments and Services

The objectives of this phase are to:

Develop communication and coordination strategies between school and postschool environments;

Utilize advocacy efforts;

Account for interactions with nonhandicapped persons, friendship and affiliation;

Account for service costs and needed financial resources; and

Account for transportation requirements.

1. Develop Communication and Coordination Strategies Between School and Postschool Environments and Services

In the final years of a severely handicapped student's public school education, information related to current functioning and proposed placement in domestic, vocational, community functioning and recreation/leisure environments must be clearly documented. If it is not, skill losses and generally inefficient transitions may result. For example, a student who, using a variety of adaptations, acquired the skills necessary to participate in meal preparation during school may never be given the opportunity to use these skills in postschool environments due to the lack of information available to receiving personnel.

Written documentation can be used to communicate information regarding a student of concern. Sample forms for such documentation can be found in Appendix B and C. Appendix B consists of a form for documenting parent/guardian, school and adult service personnel contacts by delineating the date, the initiator, the person and agency contacted, and the contact purpose and outcome. Appendix C consists of four forms which are adaptations of a strategy proposed by Pumpian, Shiraga, VanDeventer, Nisbet, Sweet, Ford & Loomis (1981) to cumulate and organize vocationally related information. The categories on these forms include present level of performance, activities/skills which require future inventions, adaptations and/or modifications of skill sequences and the level of supervision in the vocational, domestic, recreation/leisure and community functioning domains.

Strategies other than written products which can be used to communicate information and coordinate services include:

a) Telephone contacts;

b) Regular meetings during the final year or earlier in a severely handicapped student's high school career;

c) Shared responsibility of a student during the transition process for a set period of time, e.g., the least year of high school or summer school; and

d) Mutual attendance at decision making and community board meetings.

2. Utilize Advocacy Efforts

In Phase I strategies which can be used by teachers and parents/guardians to target postschool environments were offered. The strategies included a process by which the discrepancies are noted between the characteristics of a desirable postschool environment and the environment as it currently exists.

For example, such a discrepancy might involve a student who may not be sufficiently independent in the eyes of an adult service provider to transition to and function in a nonsheltered vocational environment. Yet, the parents/guardians and educators involved desired a nonsheltered vocational placement. When discrepancies such as this arise, educators, parents/guardians and adult service personnel must combine efforts to "open doors" and create new models of school and postschool service delivery. Strategies which can be used to advocate for individual and systems' changes include:

a) Demonstration efforts, e.g., proving that a student can perform a particular sequence within a specific environment;

b) School board members meeting with city and/or county service board members to set up agency agreements;

c) Parents attending service board meetings or other governing agencies to give opinions and make recommendations;

d) Public school personnel meeting with postschool agency personnel to recommend changes; and

e) Utilizing the services of local protection and advocacy organizations when legal due process is necessary.

3. Plan for Interactions With Nonhandicapped Persons, Friendship and Affiliation

Interaction, friendship and affiliation with peers and other persons often provide common threads and consistency as school and postschool environments and activities change. Therefore, it seems reasonable that when transitions are being planned and services and environments are being accessed, interactions, friendships and affiliations with both handicapped and nonhandicapped persons should be encouraged and maintained.

Strategies that educators, parents/guardians and adult service personnel can use to plan for interactions when accessing and/or creating postschool environments and services are:

a) Arranging for friends and/or peers to live or work together upon graduation;

b) Encouraging postschool agencies to recognize the importance

of interaction, friendship and affiliation in the transition to and maintenance in postschool environments;

c) Teaching severely handicapped students to use postschool environments in which the opportunity for interaction is increased; and

d) Giving severely handicapped students strategies to arrange with friends to engage in a variety of domestic, recreation/leisure and community functioning activities after work and on weekends.

4. Plan for Service Costs and Needed Financial Resources

Finances and costs of living are major concerns of the general public. Upon graduation from high school, many nonhandicapped students with assistance from their families have determined and hopefully accumulated and resolved the amount of money necessary to live, eat, play, be educated, etc. If cost and financial resources were considered only during the final year of high school, few would have the opportunity to go to college or live independently. Therefore, when planning and implementing successful transitions for severely handicapped students, these important financial resources and factors must be considered, managed, and manipulated as well.

Exact strategies to account for service costs and financial resources are difficult to articulate and beyond the scope of this paper. However, some basic considerations are worthy of mention here. When the ITP is developed, parents/guardians and adult service personnel should determine the financial resources and costs necessary for the student of concern to live in postschool environments. Resources available to a student may include: Supplemental Social Security Income; salary from work; family resources; and state, community and county allocations for housing, transportation, domestic, vocational, and community supervision. Additionally, costs should be estimated. These may include the costs of food, transportation, clothing, recreation/leisure, medications, therapy, rent, utilities and other household expenditures. Certainly, the manner in which these resources and costs are manipulated and allocated can enhance the relative smoothness and success of a transition.

5. Plan for Transportation Needs

In order for students to efficiently access postschool environments during and after the transition phase, transportation must be carefully considered. Ordinarily, the ways in which nonhandicapped persons get from their homes to work, stores, recreation/leisure facilities, etc. are dependent on personal preferences, the demands of the environments, the financial resources. Severely handicapped persons face additional factors in that they must often depend on the availability of public transportation. Many severely handicapped persons have learned to walk or ride a city bus to and from work and unless fares have increased, or their routes have changed, few problems have arisen.

However, for those severely handicapped individuals whose domestic environments are beyond the limits of public bus service or for those who cannot independently take public transportation due to motoric or other skill deficits, alternative means of getting to and from specific places have been used. In some cases, parent/guardians, coworkers, and/or friends have provided transportation to community, vocational, and/or recreational environments. However, this is not the usual case and it is unreasonable to depend solely on the goodwill of others. Undoubtedly, the unavailability of public transportation has effected the post-school placements of some severely handicapped students. That is, due to the unavailability of public transportation, a parent of a severely handicapped student may resort to the placement of their son/daughter in a sheltered environment where specialized transportation is provided by the facility. Strategies which can be used by educators, parents/guardians, and adult service personnel to avoid situations in which the availability of transportation prohibits placement in the least restrictive environment include:

a) Planning for a student's home to be within reasonable geographic proximity to vocational, community, and recreation/leisure environments;

b) Planning for a student's home and work place to be located on public transportation routes;

c) Exploring and using such private transportation options as: providing a fee for service to a coworker who lives close by and using private bus services which serve handicapped persons; and

d) Providing relevant instruction in the use of transportation during a student's school age years.

C. Phase III: Prioritize, Develop and Coordinate Transition Objectives

The objective of this phase is to prioritize, develop and coordinate objectives which reflect the actual requirements of postschool environments. Based on ecological assessments of environments and an analysis of students' performance within them, objectives can be generated. These objectives should then reflect a relative balance of pertinent activities and instructional time across domains and environments. Specific strategies for prioritizing and developing instructional objectives have been articulated by Brown, Falvey, Vincent, Kaye, Johnson, Ferrara-Parrish and Gruenewald (1979). Therefore, this section will be limited to a delineation of relevant coordination issues.

Developing objectives in one domain without consideration of others is remiss. Consider the following example. Upon graduation, Jane will live in a group home that requires that their members be out of the home between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. She is currently being trained for a community job in which the hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

every day. Given the requirements of the group home, one reasonable strategy would be to develop objectives which facilitate functioning with minimal levels of supervision in nonschool recreation/leisure environments between the hours of 2:00 and 4:00. Such environments may include local libraries, the YMCA or YWCA, bookstores, malls, etc. Without attention to the coordination of objectives in other domains, Jane's alternatives would probably be either employment in a sheltered workshop in which the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. coincide with the group home or exclusion from the group home altogether.

The careful prioritization, development and coordination of objectives can only serve to increase the likelihood of a smooth transition. An ITP and an example of its use in the domestic and community functioning domains is provided in Appendix D. This ITP provides a format for organizing individual transition objectives, and student, parent/guardian, school or teacher and adult service agency actions necessary to attain the objectives specified.

D. Phase IV: Generate, Organize, and Implement Training and Supervision Models

The objectives in this phase are to:

Develop and utilize models and levels of supervision which approximate postschool expectations;

Provide instruction in environments which are accessible to anticipated postschool domestic and vocational environments; and

Incorporate the expertise of related services personnel into relevant environments and activities.

1. Develop and Utilize Models and Levels of Supervision Which Approximate Postschool Expectations

During the development of the ITP, instructional models and levels of supervision must be examined. For example, if a future graduate is in need of a minimal level of supervision upon moving to an adult domestic environment, arrangements must be made to secure services which approximate these expectations. One type of postschool domestic environment and supervision model which was arranged for two severely handicapped graduates is presented below in an advertisement by a coordinator of a local domestic agency.

> I'm in the process of helping two young men who are clients of mine recruit another young man to live with them as a "paid roommate." This person would be responsible for providing minimum supervision and support overnight as a supplement to our services. His role would be that of a facilitator and role model, versus a houseparent or staff person. He would work closely with and under the supervision of associated staff members.

The specific duties of this position include:

a. Helping the men establish and maintain a morning routine, including personal hygiene activities and breakfast preparation;
b. Assisting one of the men in monitoring his daily medications;
c. Helping the men prepare some of their evening meals;
d. Accompanying the men to activities in the community 3-4 times a month;
e. Being available in the apartment overnight to provide support as needed.

Compensation for this position includes free room and board and a small monthly salary. The schedule would be compatible with that of a student, since he would have time off during the day and for several hours each evening. Arrangements will also be made for days off.

Finding a suitable match between the supervision available in postschool environments and that needed by the severely handicapped student may consume a significant amount of time and effort. One model school systems can use to arrive at reasonable matches involves the employment of a transition teacher. Taylor (1982) describes the transition teacher's responsibilities in the Madison Metropolitan School District as:

a) Working with teachers, parents/guardians, related service personnel, and postschool agencies to develop transition plans prior to an individual student's graduation from high school;

b) Assisting in the coordination of vocational transition plans with those of domestic, general community, and recreation/leisure;

c) Working with a variety of school and community personnel to develop and provide instruction in postschool environments;

d) Assisting in the coordination of vocational programs for severely handicapped students on a city-wide basis; e.g., across schools and geographic areas;

e) Working with postschool agencies during the transition planning and implementation process to aid them in making modifications in their service delivery systems such that they will accommodate the varying and everchanging needs of students; and

f) Transferring responsibility for each graduating student to the appropriate agency.

2. Provide Instruction in Environments Which are Accessible to Postschool Domestic and Vocational Environments

During the transition phase of a severely handicapped student's educational career, instruction should occur primarily in those environments which will be used subsequent to graduation. This is important for two reasons. First, though systematic instruction in one environment can enhance the ability of some students to perform skills in others, most severely handicapped students require instruction in the actual environment in which the activity is required. Second, because of transportation and time constraints, students should learn to access those environments which are within a reasonable distance from their domestic and vocational environments.

Strategies which can be used by educators, parents/guardians, and adult service providers to enhance the likelihood of instruction occurring in relevant environments are to:

a) Determine as soon as possible the future home and work environments of the student of concern; and

b) Utilize community environments which are accessible by public or private transportation and within a reasonable distance from those home and work environments. For example, teaching a student to use the grocery store on the east side of town when his/her home is located in the center of town should be avoided, if possible.

3. Incorporate the Expertise of Related Services Personnel Into Relevant Environments and Activities

Severely handicapped students from the ages of 3 to 21 have available to them the expertise of a wide variety of related service personnel. While this expertise is just as important to students transitioning to and subsequently functioning in postschool environments, it is rarely made available upon graduation. Therefore, the transition effort is twofold: first, assuring that related service personnel are available; and second, utilizing them in such a way as to maximize postschool functioning.

In order to access and incorporate the expertise of related service personnel it is important for educators, parents/guardians and adult service providers to:

a) Communicate to community service personnel the importance of speech and language therapy, physical and occupational therapy, mobility training, etc.;

b) Request that therapy services be integrated into the severely handicapped person's daily routine. For the majority of severely handicapped individuals, the outpatient clinical model for receiving services is inappropriate, e.g., going to the clinic once per week for one hour of physical therapy. This is largely due to the fact that therapy objectives are more readily achieved when they are integrated into the individual's domestic,

recreation/leisure, community functioning and vocational life space; and

c) Arrange for the transfer of information from school to postschool related service personnel.

E. Phase V: Evaluate the Effectiveness of Transition Plans

The objectives of this phase are to:

Conduct a follow-up examination of severely handicapped graduates; and

Infuse information into the public school and adult service delivery system.

1. Conduct a Follow-Up Examination of Severely Handicapped Graduates

For years, regular educators have been systematically collecting information regarding the "whereabouts" and success of their graduates. Special educators should make the same commitment regarding the collection of follow-up information. The more successful the severely handicapped individual is subsequent to graduation the more likely that success, at least in part, can be attributed to the public school system. Conversely, failure or lack of success of a severely handicapped student can provide critical information as to how to design and implement more relevant longitudinal curricular strategies and effective ITPs.

The following strategies can be used by administrators and others responsible for evaluation in the public school and adult service delivery system to collect relevant follow-up data:

a) Conduct observations and interviews with relevant persons in the domestic, vocational, recreation/leisure and general community life space of each severely handicapped graduate on a yearly basis subsequent to graduation from high school (VanDeventer, et al. 1981);

b) Conduct an analysis of and document the skills necessary to function successfully in the critical environments which are presently or should be utilized by a severely handicapped individual;

c) Make hypotheses as to the reasons for the success or failure of the graduate; and

d) Generate reasonable strategies that could be used by public school and adult service personnel and parents/guardians, to improve ITPs.

After these data have been collected and hypotheses generated as to the successes and failures, strategies for infusing this information back into the service delivery system are necessary.

2. Infuse Information into the Service Delivery System

Once the follow-up information regarding successful and unsuccessful transitions has been collected, it should be immediately provided to public school personnel, parent/guardians, and adult service providers. Without this process, curricula and transition strategies which are not maximally effective will continue.

Strategies which can be used by public school and adult service administrators to disseminate information include:

a) Meeting with adult service agencies to provide information that might be of interest or of use to them;

b) Meetings with parents/guardians of severely handicapped students to explain findings and recommendations;

c) Providing a wide variety of inservice training, technical assistance and consultation to teachers, related service personnel, postschool agencies and others; and

d) Providing preservice training to students from local colleges/universities and technical schools.

A comprehensive approach to evaluation and dissemination enhances the accountability of public school systems and adult service agencies.

V. SUMMARY

Every spring, thousands of severely handicapped students will graduate from high school without ITPs. As a result, many will remain at home, work in sheltered workshops and activity centers, and access few community and recreation/leisure environments. In the future, however, through careful longitudinal planning, accessing, prioritizing, training, and evaluation efforts by and between parents/guardians, school and adult service agency personnel, many more severely handicapped graduates can look forward to living semi-independently in supervised apartments, to working in nonsheltered vocational environments where interactions with nonhandicapped persons can occur, and to accessing a wide variety of community and recreation/leisure environments.

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APPENDIX A

Parent/Guardian Transition Questionnaire: A Guide

1. Have educational or other personnel talked with you about the postschool future of your son/daughter?

2. What do you want for your son/daughter during the next year, in 5 years, 10 years?

   Recreation/Leisure:

   Vocational:

   Community:

   Domestic:

3. What most concerns you about the future of your son/daughter?

4. When your son/daughter made a transition in the past, e.g., from one school to another, what were the problems encountered, if any?

5. Are you presently in contact with any agencies that will or may be involved with your son/daughter after graduation?

6. Are you aware of any community agencies that will or might be involved with your son/daughter? Do you plan on making or maintaining contact with them?

7. What do you anticipate to be your level of involvement with your son/daughter upon graduation from high school? Is this acceptable to you?

8. With whom and where would you like your son/daughter to live? Specify the nature of the living situation, e.g., apartment, house, etc.

9. Where would you like your son/daughter to work? Specify the nature of the work.

10. What recreational/leisure facilities has your son/daughter utilized? Which ones would you like him/her to use upon graduation from high school?

APPENDIX B

A Form for Documenting Parental, School and Adult Service Agency Contacts

STUDENT: _____

CHRONOLOGICAL AGE: _____

YEARS REMAINING IN SCHOOL: _____

DATE: Month Day Year	PERSON/AGENCY INITIATING CONTACT	PERSON OR AGENCY CONTACTED	PURPOSE OF CONTACT	OUTCOME OF CONTACT

APPENDIX C

Form C-1

A Form for Organizing Relevant Vocational, Domestic, Recreation/Leisure and Community Functioning

I. VOCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

A. Present Level of Performance

1. Work Related Attitudes

2. Work Related Skills

3. Job Skills

4. Other

B. Activities/Skills Which Require Future Interventions

C. Adaptations/Modifications

D. Level of Supervision

Form C-2

II. DOMESTIC PERFORMANCE

A. Present Level of Performance:

1. Housekeeping:

2. Self Care:

3. Cooking:

4. Other:

B. Activities/Skills Which Require Future Interventions:

C. Adaptations/Modifications

D. Level of Supervision

Form C-3

III. RECREATION/LEISURE PERFORMANCE

A. Present Level of Performance

1. Domestic Related

a) Individual

b) Group

2. Vocationally Related

a) Individual

b) Group

3. Community Related

a) Individual

b) Group

4. Other

B. Activities/Skills Which Require Future Interventions

C. Adaptations/Modifications

D. Level of Supervision

Form C-4

IV. COMMUNITY FUNCTIONING PERFORMANCE

A. Present Level of Performance:

1. Street Crossing

2. General Pedestrian

3. Bus Riding (Please include routes)

4. Shopping

5. Restaurant Usage

6. Adaptation/Modifications

B. Activities/Skills Which Require Future Interventions

C. Adaptations/Modifications

D. Level of Supervision

DATE: _____

APPENDIX D

Form D-1

A Format for Organizing Individual Transition Objectives and Student, Parent/Guardian, School and Related Agency Personnel Actions

DOMESTIC TRANSITION PLAN:

Student: _____
Age: _____
Years Remaining in School: 1

STUDENT OBJECTIVE	STUDENT RELATED ACTION	PARENT/GUARDIAN ACTION	SCHOOL OR TEACHER ACTION	ADULT SERVICE AGENCY ACTION
1) Long Term Goal Mary will live in a semi-supervised apartment and will be responsible for meal planning, purchasing, cooking, cleaning and self-care.	1. Mary should choose friend(s) with whom she would like to live.	1. Initiate or maintain ongoing communication with school and postschool domestic agency and aid in the determination of the least restrictive living environment, possible roommates, financial resources, etc. a) keep a log of all communications; b) examine options available; c) determine most appropriate placement for son/daughter;	1. Provide instruction in the actual future domestic environment or the closest approximation possible during the time period when student actions are necessary. In order to accomplish this, the school should: a) communicate strategies and progress to post-school agency and parents. Timeline ongoing; b) provide a "transition" teacher to work simultaneously with postschool agency personnel. Timeline - September; c) eventually transfer instructional responsibility to postschool agency personnel. Timeline - April.	1. Plan and attain funds for domestic environments and the necessary supervision for the student. Plan a strategy for attaining information from parents/guardians and school regarding previous intervention and progress: a) provide a staff member to work concurrently with school personnel involved in domestic training. Timeline: April
Timeline: December 15. Then review again.		2. On weekends parents and their son/daughter should utilize environments close to the future domestic site.		

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DATE: _____

Form D-2

COMMUNITY FUNCTIONING TRANSITION PLAN:

Student: _____
Age: _____
Years Remaining in School: 1

STUDENT OBJECTIVE	STUDENT RELATED ACTION	PARENT/GUARDIAN ACTION	SCHOOL OR TEACHER ACTION	ADULT SERVICE AGENCY ACTION
1. Mary will learn the route from present home to vocational site at the university hospital and will ride the bus independently. Timeline: 8 months.	1. Mary will be responsible for bringing her bus ticket and/or money daily and determining the correct time to "catch" the bus.	1. When convenient, accompany Kim on route on weekends.	1. Provide instruction 3 times each week to and from the vocational site.	1. None at this time.
2. When the future domestic environment has been selected and determined Mary will take the city bus or some other form of alternative transportation to vocational environment. Timeline: 3 months.	2. None at this time.	2. Explore transportation options available and accessible to domestic environment.	2. Provide instruction initially 3 times per week.	2. The person and agency responsible for domestic supervision will monitor functioning.
3. Mary will get up, get ready for school and prepare a simple breakfast with a minimal level of assistance. Timeline: 8 months.		3. Fade morning supervision to assure that Mary can be reasonably independent. - Get an alarm clock for Mary	3. Continue to provide instruction on meal preparation.	3. None at this time.

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